The Settlement of Cherokee County

by Geogre A. Brown

During the winter of 1855-1856, in Milford, Massachusetts, a company calling themselves The Milford Western Emigration Society was formed with Dr. Dwight Russell as its head and Dr. Slocum as his assistant. The company got together a group of Milford citizens who were willing to try their fortunes in the new, and almost unheard of, state of Iowa.

In February, 1856, Carlton Corbett and Lemuell Parkhurst were sent out by the company as advance agents to see about the land which was to be preempted from the government for settlement; enough land that each head of a family should receive one hundred acres. This land was around Sioux City, but by the time the agents arrived, all the desirable land had been taken.

While "cruising around" Sioux City to see what was the best thing to do, they traveled up the Big Sioux River a short distance prospecting. As there was very little timber, the land was undesirable, for there must be wood for homes and fires, so they returned to Sioux City where they came upon Robert Perry who had recently been down through the Cherokee section. He highly recommended this land to the agents.

With Perry for a guide, Corbett started for Cherokee, leaving Parkhurst in Sardges Bluff. They camped in a grove in Pilot Township, and from this point explored the nearby land, viewing with great interest the lone, big rock which was later known as Pilot Rock. The land seemed very desirable for their settlement.

On the 14th day of April, 1856, the outcoming members of the Emigration Society boarded a train and left the little town of Milford. Those who started were Dr. Dwight Russell, General Agent; George Kay, Treasurer; George W. Lebourveau, Albert Phipps, Asa Slayton, Benjamin Sawyell, Lysander Sawtell, Albert Simonds, Samuel Wheeler, Robert Hammond, James Hammond with his wife and three children, Henry, James and Mary, Thomas Clifford with his wife and daughter, and James A. Brown with his wife and three children,

George, Clara and Tom. This group was only a small part of the entire company. They were the ones who were supposed to get the land plotted and put things into shape for the coming of the entire colony the following spring, but extreme winter and Indian difficulties made further colonization a very hazardous proposition, so the rest of the company never came.

From Milford the little company went by train through Albany, New York, Ohio, and to the muddy little town of Chicago where they stopped for one day. Again by train, they went from Chicago to Dunleath, which is now East Dubuque, Ilinois, where they spent two days buying two teams, a harness and wagon. With this equipment they started their slow trail through 275 miles of Iowa mud.

Since James A. Brown and Thomas Clifford were the only members of the company who had shipped household goods, it was necessary for them to wait until the freight came through, which was about six weeks. They spent this time in the little town of Centralia, about ten miles from Dubuque. They stayed a few days in a hotel and then they started work in a nursery which was just opening up. Since living quarters were hard to get, the two men and their families lived with the owner of the nursery and family. A firm friendship sprang up among the families and it was with some sorrow that they separated when the goods came at the end of six weeks.

The goods were put on board the steamer, "Clara Belle," and with their owners and families, all set sail down the Mississippi for St. Louis. At times the steamer got stranded on sand bars and the hands got out their long poles carried for this purpose, and with might and main pushed the steamer back into the flowing water. Frequently it was necessary to stop and "wood up," for wood was the only fuel used on the boats. They kept it in great cords along the river bank at convenient places.

At last they reached St. Louis where they bought a stove, some carpenter tools, and other necessities. At that time, St. Louis had no bridges, and all the coal used in the city was ferried across from the Illinois side, with teams of great mules drawing the ferries. The new steamer, Hannibal, was waiting, so the household goods belonging to the two families were

put on board, and they started up the Missouri River for Council Bluffs, which they reached without mishap.

They remained in Council Bluffs until August, living in a cabin on the farm of a Scotsman by the name of McKenzie. Mr. Brown purchased a yoke of oxen and a wagon, and spent the time hauling sand from the river to the city, a distance of about five miles. All along the river banks where the railroad roundhouses stand today, the grass was higher than a man's head.

The Cliffords decided not to venture further, but the Brown family thought the time had come to make the break for the new country for which they had started, so they packed their good once more and took the wagon trail leading north with unsurmountable difficulties laying before them. After an hour or two of travel they reached the bluffs which had to be climbed. Brown was not familiar with the type of wagon needed for the trails of the west, and a sharp salesman had persuaded him to buy a wide tracked wagon which required a road six inches wider than the ordinary wagon. Consequently, they couldn't climb the hills. Hence, there was only one thing to do; return to the little cabin once more until some help was available. They did not know how long they might have to wait for help, so the family bought a cow in order that they might have their own milk. It was not very long before some of the Cherokee settlers came with their horse teams to Council Bluffs to get their groceries and with their assistance, the trek for the new land was once more begun and this time successfully completed. Up the river to Smithland the little company proceeded, and on to Ida Grove and Cherokee.

They found all of the Cherokee settlers living in the Cherokee House, a log cabin 16 by 20 feet, with a cook shack at the side made of poles in the ground woven over with small willow branches, and Perry with his wife and children in a wagon at the side. The Brown claim was on the south bank of the Little Sioux River on the west side of Second Street. Here they pitched a tent for a few days until the other men in the settlement could help them build their new cabin which had only one room. At least it was HOME, after months of wandering.

Soon their old cow assisted the family larder by having a calf, and thus furnished milk for the family. The calf itself grew into a splendid milk cow.

Table provisions were also aided by wild turkeys and other game. The turkeys came around the cabin and tent as freely as though they had been raised there, for the woods were not far. The winter which followed was so severe, however, that very few appeared after that first fall.

After the grass died that year, there occurred a very trying experience. Mr. Brown was at the Cherokee House on the other side of the river, when there suddenly appeared on the horizon a prairie fire, driven straight toward the cabin by a strong northeast wind. His family made an attempt to start a backfire, but their hurried efforts were futile and the approach of the fire too quick. Gathering together a few keepsakes and necessary articles, Mrs. Brown with the three children hastened to the shallow river. Mr. Brown rushed for home to find that the fire had swept around the cabin without burning anything. The rest of the settlement, which was on the other side of the river was not in the path of the fire at all.

Later that fall, Lebourveau returned from the east with his wife whom he had gone back the latter part of the summer to get. With them were Silas Parkhurst and his wife. The men had to go to Iowa City with an ox team to get their household goods, and it was necessary to make some provision for their wives. The Browns, being the only ones in the immediate neighborhood who had a stove, were asked to move into the two-roomed Cherokee House, and take care of Mrs. Lebourveau and Mrs. Parkhurst until their husbands should return.

About Thanksgiving it started to snow and continued snowing, with extremely cold weather. With only the cook stove for heat, there was much suffering. During the day, bed clothes were hung around the stove so as to make a small square, just large enough for the seven occupants of the house to sit around the stove. Mrs. Lebourveau and Mrs. Parkhurst put up a tent in the upstairs to help protect them from the cold, and Mr. and Mrs. Brown with the three children slept on a big rope bed.

To make matters worse, they began to run out of food. Fortunately, Corbett and Perry had planted an acre or two of corn and potatoes when they arrived. The corn had been cut on the stalks and piled in a pen, and the potatoes had been dug and left in a pile where they had frozen, but these were preferable to starvation. The settlers parched the ears of corn in their oven, ground it in coffee mills, and made corn meal mush. By lightening the wagon to the fullest extent, taking off the box and putting on a barrel, it was possible for them to drive the team of oxen the two miles to the pile of potatoes, get a barrel of them, and return in a day's time. Mrs. Brown made up a rhyme about this:

> If I were a cat, how quick I'd go
> Swiftly o'er the frozen snow;
> To distant lands I soon would flee
> And bid farewell to Cherokee.

During the first part of December when the snow had become about a foot deep, the Sioux Indians from Pipestone, Minnesota came through Cherokee on their way to visit the Omahas at Omaha, Nebraska. On this trip they seemed very friendly, begging, of course, for something to eat but chatting and laughing in a friendly fashion. Some eight or ten stopped at the Brown cabin and all were fed and warmed. At that time no one had any idea of the trouble that was to follow. In fact, the settlers had been isolated so long, they welcomed the arrival of anyone, even the Indians.

Still the snow fell and the cold continued, and food became more and more scarce. A stranger appeared at the cabin one day and asked for food and shelter, both of which were freely given even at the cost of personal sacrifice. He gave his name as Davis and said he had come up the river to see the Taylors who lived about seven miles on up. Days passed and still he made no move to travel on, so at last Mrs. Brown had to tell him that it would be necessary for him to go. The task of providing for seven people was almost more than they could handle under the circumstances.

No one will ever know the true story of that journey, for death lay at the end of the trail for Davis. His tracks showed that he had reached the Taylor cabin all right, and could have gone in even though they were not at home, for the door was

unlocked. But for some unexplainable reason, he turned from the door and continued on up the river. Within about a mile his body, frozen stiff, was found by the Taylors who followed his tracks. This was the first death in Cherokee County.

All during this time not a word had been heard from the outside world; not even from Mr. Lebourveau and Mr. Parkhurst who had expected to be back from Iowa City in a month and who had now been gone three months.

About the first of March, the children were very much excited one forenoon to see a group of men coming around the bluff. They ran to a little rise of ground nearby and watched until they were sure the visitors were Indians. One group headed for the Holbrook cabin and one for the Holden cabin. Then the children ran to the house and told the news. There was no apprehension of trouble. Mr. Holden, who was at the Brown cabin where he stayed most of the time, went out to see what was happening when told that the Indians had stopped at his cabin. He saw that they had broken into the house. He asked George Brown to go with him and they went toward his cabin. As they drew nearer, Mr. Holden got "cold feet" and said to the boy, "You go on and see what they are doing and I will go back to the house." With no thought of fear, the lad kept on going toward the Holden cabin until he saw an Indian step out to the side of the cabin and fire a gun in his direction, but he was too far away to be hit. Evidently the Indian had not intended to hit him, only give warning that they were not to be fooled with this time.

There was reason for the Indian's violence. They had been peaceful when they had started for the Omaha region, and had remained so as far as Smithland. There they started to take enough prairie hay from a stack the settlers had gathered to feed their ponies, but the angry settlers stopped them and took away their guns and told them that if they would go on, in the morning they could come and get their guns. Go back and beg for their guns? They had done no wrong! The grass grew wild upon the prairie. The fact that the white man had cut it and stacked it and felt that he had a right to it was a strange thought to the mind of the Indian. The wilds had always been his!

At daylight, the Indians made their angry and sullen departure from Smithland, either leaving the ponies or more probably sending them back to the friendly Omahas. At every white man's home they stopped, entered without parley, moodily searched the place, and took every shot gun that could be found. Already they had stopped at Correctionville, and Robert Perry's, and now Holden's.

Having opened a trunk and taken some clothing, they broke Holden's gun and left it. Then they turned their attention to the Brown cabin which was about a quarter of a mile north. They opened the door and boldly walked in. Talking to each other in their own language, they looked about the cabin for guns, pointing the guns they had in their hands around the room and at the occupants, though not as if they intended to shoot to kill. Still, their tones were menacing. The cabin contained too little food to attract them long. One Indian perceived a bit of tallow on the shelf by the door and eagerly reached for it. One bite, however, was all he wanted for it was rank, and he threw it back onto the shelf. They wandered about for a few minutes, then left the cabin and went east to the river where they put up their tepees in the same place they had camped when going down the river in December.

The next day the settlers got together and decided that they should go in a body to the Indians' camp to have a parley with them about stealing Holden's clothing and breaking his gun. The Indians, however, were in no mood for a parley, and seeing the white men coming they ran out on the river bank and fired several shots at the approaching palefaces. Then they retreated under cover of the bank, loaded, and running part way up the bank, fired again. Since no one was hit and the men proceeded to come, the Indians stopped firing and came together for a parley, but the parley was all on the white man's side. The Indians refused to talk, but they soon showed what they thought about matters. The 18 or 20 Indian men divided into groups and proceeded to find all of the settlers' guns. In one of the cabins they had taken all of the guns but one. This one Mr. Hammond was not going to let them have, but when he hung onto it, they dragged him outdoors and pounded him, breaking several ribs until he let them have

the gun. The other two men in the cabin, Sawtell and Corbett, reached out through the door and dragged Hammond in by the feet; otherwise he would probably have been killed. Then they braced themselves against the door, expecting that the Indians would try to enter, but they contented themselves by shooting through the door. Since the men inside were against the sides of the door they escaped injury. As the Indians passed the window, one of them peered in to see if they had hit anyone. Then they proceeded to the barnyard where they shot the best ox in the lot. This they dressed and took to their camp.

At the same time a different group of the Indians visited the Brown cabin. Several of them went to the barn where Mr. Brown was feeding the stock from the haystack. One of them took the fork from Mr. Brown's hands, and all the time talking in his native tongue to the others, he raised the fork breast high and thrusting it toward Mr. Brown, he said, "Nepe, nepe," the Sioux word for 'kill.' Since his victim did not flinch or show any signs of fear, he soon lowered the fork, handed it back to the owner, got off the haystack and joined the other group at the house. As soon as he could do so without showing the Indians that he had been alarmed about his family, Mr. Brown left his feeding and hurried to the house. grateful to find that nothing had been disturbed except the guns, one of which, a rifle, had not been found as Mrs. Parkhurst had been ironing and her clothes had covered it. Since rifles were heavy, the Indians would probably not have taken it, anyway, but they would have broken it. When Mr. Holden saw that the Indians had one of his guns, he reached out his hand as though to take it. Quick as a flash the Indian drew it to his shoulder, cocked it, and stood with the muzzle in Holden's face. Needless to say, Holden made no further objection. Having found the guns, the Indians left the cabin without disturbing any thing else.

As they went outside, they fired off the weapons and reloaded them. Then they made their way directly to where the cattle were feeding in a yard nearby. The cattle saw them coming and ran down onto the ice on the creek where they were accustomed to being watered. The Indians stood on the

bank, fired and killed the best ox in this bunch. Then they dressed it and went to their camp.

Still, for several days the Indians stayed around, coming to the houses occasionally, but things were quiet. Along about four o'clock one afternoon Mr. Lebourveau, who had been gone now nearly six months, walked into the settlement. Fortunately, or providentially, he was wearing a government blanket, and the Indians who were in the Brown cabin when he arrived immediately thought that he was one of the state militia sent out after them. One of the Indians stealthily peered up the stairway to see if there were any more men up there, then they left the cabin. Early the next morning they quietly took their departure.

Though the Indians had gone, Mr. Lebourveau was still uneasy for he had left Mr. Parkhurst the afternoon before about five miles from the settlement, and he should have been in before or soon after dark, and still he had not come. About nine or ten in the morning Mr. Parkhurst arrived at the Corbett cabin. As Mr. Corbett went out to meet him, Parkhurst said, "Let me have a match to go down to that haystack and make a fire." The night spent in the severe cold had dazed him, but Mr. Corbett worked over him, fed him and warmed him and soon he was himself again, only the end of his left thumb was frozen. Since it was sore, he got into the habit of rubbing it with his other hand, a habit which remained with him all the rest of his life.

The two men told the others that they arrived in Iowa City and obtained their household goods without mishap. They had started back over the trail when it began to snow and they weren't able to get beyond Sac City. Finding that there had been no travel to break the road through to Cherokee, they knew that it would be impossible for them to get any further with the wagon. So they left their team and household goods in Sac City and started out on a 40 mile walk through unbroken snow three feet deep. They camped together the first night near Storm Lake. On the evening of the second day Mr. Lebourveau reached the settlement, leaving Mr. Parkhurst to follow at his slower rate, near enough so that he

could have reached home by dark. It was a relief to the settlers when he finally came.

Several days later the men decided to go hunting to see if they couuld find something to help out the extremely scanty larder, for still the snow was too deep to consider getting to market—60 miles away. After crossing to the east side of the river, they found a drove of elk and killed one of them. This was some help, but not what they had thought for the elk was so poor that soup bones formed the largest part of him.

Still several more days passed and Ink-pa-du-ta, the chief of the Sioux, with a number of his sons, walked into the settlement. They came right into the Brown cabin, sat down, and smoked awhile in silence. Then still without a word, they got up and went on their way after the others. A little while later Mrs. Brown went out to the clothes line to get some of the children's stockings which had been hung out to dry, only to find that they were missing. These stockings were the only things taken by the Chief and his sons.

Not a word had been heard from the outside world since the snows had begun to fall early in the autumn, so it was a great day in the little settlement when Mr. Corbett set out for Sioux City, sixty miles away, to get the mail. It was going to take some time, they knew, for still the snow was too deep for traveling other than on foot. When the time came for his arrival home, how anxiously the road was watched, until he returned. Letters from the folks at home and papers which told of the events of the world came as a joy to the settlers.

In the later part of spring a lone Indian arrived in the settlement and stayed for some time, living in his own tepee alone in the woods, but being very friendly with the settlers. One day he shot a wild goose and brought it to the Brown cabin indicating that he wanted to sell it. Mrs. Parkhurst bought it from him and he went away happy with his few coins. During the day the Indian spent his time hunting and trapping and in the evenings he often went to the Holbrook cabin where he played euchre.

By the 13th of April the snow had gone and the whole prairie around the settlement was burned so as to avoid the possibility of prairie fire and to give the new grass a chance

to start. On Sunday, the 14th of April, one year had passed since the settlers had left Massachusetts.

Indians became their chief concern once more. They had been causing trouble all the way north to their reservation. After leaving Cherokee they went on to Peterson and Spirit Lake, their depredations becoming worse and worse.

When they reached Spirit Lake, a village of 30 or 40 people, they entered one of the homes and began their usual begging. The man of the house went to the flour barrel to get some flour and while he was leaning over the barrel, one of the Indians shot him. This was the beginning of a great massacre which followed. All of the inhabitants were shot.

The story of the massacre reached the Cherokee settlers and added a great uneasiness to their lives. On the morning of April 14, 1857, between nine and ten o'clock, a messenger came to the opposite bank of the river which was too high to be crossed and yelled, "The Indians are coming down the river killing and burning everything." Within an hour's time, the bed clothes, food, a few keepsakes and all of the families were in a wagon heading southward—hastening as fast as an ox team can ever be made to hasten. All day and all night the little party plodded on until they reached Correctionville, a distance of 30 miles or so. Correctionville was not far enough, so they pressed on only stopping long enough to get something to eat. On they went to Smithland and then stopped at Ashton. There they were able to occupy an empty cabin and stayed waiting for news of the Indians.

Hearing no further word, the men folks decided to go back. Taking the ox team, they went back to their homes to find that some of the white men from Smithland, where the Indian trouble had first begun, had gone up there after the Cherokee settlers had passed Smithland on their way down, and had stolen what groceries had been left behind and any clothing they seemed to like.

Mrs. Brown got work making shirts for the store. In this way she was able to provide for her little family. As soon as the men found that all was well as far as the Indians were concerned, they went back. Upon reaching Cherokee they ob-

tained a search warrant and headed for Smithland. By diligent work, most, if not all of the things stolen were found.

With the return to their homes once more, the first and most important task was to start a garden with corn, potatoes and other crops, for another winter must be provided for. Later a post office route was established between Sioux City and Spirit Lake, and mail was received once a week. This was a tremendous help, for they no longer felt that they had been completely separated from the rest of the world. Along the middle of the summer the household goods belonging to the Lebourveaus and Parkhursts arrived, so the families parted company, the Browns building a cabin on one of their town site lots. Each settler had received seven town site lots of half an acre each besides his 80 acres and timber lot.

When fall came, all the crops were good even though the eastern Yankee corn had been planted. No further word had ever been heard of Indian troubles, so the second winter was much more pleasant than the first. Before winter set in, one of the semi-annual trips had been made to get food supplies. Most frequently these trips were made to Sioux City, for this was the nearest place, there being no road connection from Sac City. If grain was to be ground, then it was necessary to go to Panora, 120 miles away. Usually three bushels of wheat were bought by each family, and out of this the owner would get 100 pounds of flour besides the shorts and bran from this amount. The miller took his toll from the whole wheat. Sometimes the trip was made through to Des Moines for plows, or even to Booneville for other things, but to whichever place they went, it had to be with an ox team and wagon for they had few horses until after the War.

In January of 1858, a baby girl, Ida Maria, arrived at the Brown home, the first white child born in Cherokee County.

Months passed and in the summer of that year, the first arrangements for a school were made. Two other families with children, Albert Haynes and Albert Phipps, had arrived since the first settlers had come, and a school was now a necessity. Mrs. Parkhurst who had three children of her own taught the school in her house and was paid $55 for three months. There

were 12 children in the school and they used any books which could be found in their homes.

The first Fourth of July celebration was held the summer of 1858. Mr. Holbrook had built a good sized hay barn on his land and it was decided to have the celebration there. Dinner was to be served, but it had been thought best that each family should set a table for itself. When the members of one of the families heard this, they angrily said that they might as well eat at home if they had to set their own table. However, the day was a success.

In August, 1861, there occurred the death of the only Indian killed in Cherokee County. Since the outbreak of the Civil War, the Indians had become much more restless. Two men, Andy and Sam Purcel, had been appointed by the state government to act as scouts through northern Iowa and southern Minneosta, to warn of any Indians off their reservations. Cherokee was a sort of headquarters for the Purcel brothers.

It was dark before they reached Cherokee one evening after a trip to Sioux Rapids, and as they neared the outskirts of the settlement, the one who was driving the team watched carefully an object which seemed to move along the hillside as they moved. Being fairly sure now, he said to the brother who was lying down in the bottom of the light wagon, "I believe there are Indians around here." Both became attentive. The object moved and for an instant was silhouetted against the sky. The Purcels were too wise to shoot or to make any signs of having seen him. When they reached their stopping point, a dog was barking furiously, giving evidence that there were more Indians around. A white horse belonging to Mr. Lebourveau was tied close to the end of the barn, so they put their ponies in the barn and tied them up. Then they took their blankets and quietly went to the roof of the barn to watch.

For several hours they watched but saw and heard nothing. Then suddenly one of them noticed that the white horse was moving along close to the edge of the barn. They listened carefully, but heard nothing. They were too familiar with Indians, however, not to know that an Indian had that horse in spite of the silence. The Indian walked the horse along the side of the barn, too close for the watchers above to see. When

he reached the end of the barn he had to move out away from the building to let down the fence bars into the yard. It was dark, so the Indian showed only like a shadow, but one of the watchers fired and shot the Indian just as he stooped to set down a pail he was carrying in his hand. At the same time the other brother looked to the other side of the barn and saw another Indian on one of the ponies which they had put in the barn a few hours before. As soon as the shot rang out, this Indian began to jump up and down like a frog, making a poor target in the dark. It was told afterward that he was hit and died shortly after getting back to the reservation, but he made away with the pony anyway.

No one ever knew how many Indians were there that night, for nothing else was taken except an old gray mare which had been running with the colts. And after a day or two she returned. She showed that she had had a hard ride. When the 20 mile slough was reached, she probably gave out on her rider and he turned her loose.

The two men descended the barn and ran to the Indian who was lying where he fell. As the two stood beside him, either they touched him or his arm which had been balanced across his body slipped off. Thinking they felt him move, they fired another shot at him to make sure that he was dead. The shots awakened the settlers. The next morning everyone hurried to the scene to look at the Indian, a big swarthy Sioux, whose body was taken to the old cemetery on the bluff above Hill Creek and buried.

A short time after this, September 1, 1861, occurred another incident in the life of the settlers. The day had been exceedingly hot for that time of year. The Brown family had retired and were asleep. Suddenly, Mr. Brown was awakened in the middle of the night by the restless lowing of the cattle. Hastily dressing he went outside to see what was the matter. After a quick inspection of the skies, he returned to the cabin, and waking his wife and children told them that they had better dress at once. As quickly as possible all dressed and sat together on the bed in the west end of the room. By this time the wind was rapidly rising, and soon the family saw the west edge of the roof right over their heads rise and fall with gusts

of wind. Finally, the whole roof tipped up on end and dropped just outside the doorway. It started to pour and in a few seconds they were all soaked. The roof was still on the Sawtell cabin which stood about twenty rods to the south, and as soon as the wind had abated enough to make walking possible, the family went there. The morning light revealed no other serious damage except the destruction of Mr. Brown's wagon box which the wind had picked up off the ground and completely destroyed. The roof of the Sawtell cabin had been torn loose and some of the logs moved several inches, but it did not come clear off. This was their first experience with Iowa windstorms. In a few days the new roof, a sod one this time, covered the Brown cabin and they gladly moved back to their cabin once more.

The matter of religious services had always been a cause for deep concern by some of the settlers. There was no minister among them for years and often conditions were not such as to make services possible, for the settlement was scattered. But, during these years, whenever it was possible, Mr. Brown gathered the little company together for prayer and one of Spurgeon's sermons. Thus, the children were not allowed to grow up in complete ignorance of the church.

Following the killing of the Sioux at Cherokee, some of the state troops were sent there at once, and during the fall and winter they built a stockade and blockhouse. The stockade was built on a triangular plan, with the blockhouse on the northwest. They were arranged for the care of the settlers if it became necessary for them to seek its protection, with sleeping and eating quarters and stables for stock. It was built of native timber, with the posts set two or three feet in the ground, and overlapping each other several inches to avoid the possibility of shooting between them. For a number of years the stockade and blockhouse stood, but were never used except by the soldiers. Later one fall they were removed.

Since part of the settlers moved on to newer frontiers, their removal left the little colony with such small protection from the increasingly restless Indians that all determined to leave with them. This decision had been greatly hastened by the news of the New Ulm massacre which was part of a

general Indian uprising by the Sioux in Minnesota. There, every resident of the village was killed and every Indian lived.

A story was told of two boys who were along the river in their own boat when they saw a boat of Indians coming toward them. Leaving the boat, the boys hid in the tall grass, but the Indians gave chase. The boys had their loaded guns with them. When the Indians got close enough to shoot, they made a wide jump to the side, dropped in the tall grass, and while the Indians were looking for their trail, they shot the two headmost. Then they ran loading their guns. They repeated this performance until they had killed all six of the Indian warriors. For the most part the Indians had the upper hand, for they were numerous and fierce. Terror and dismay spread through all the settlements in southern Minnesota and northern Iowa.

The troops were removed to Sioux City and all of the settlers except the Phipps, who went to Webster City, also made their way to Sioux City. Here they planned to stay until Indian troubles were over. Sioux City was seething with excitement. Each messenger who crossed the plains was eagerly questioned, and the man with the biggest imagination had the best audiences. Wild rumors were abundant.

It had been decided by the residents of Sioux City, to build their forts by digging in the ground and throwing up dirt for breastworks. Each businessman was responsible for digging or having it done, so the Cherokee settlers readily found employment doing this. It was soon found that these plans were not going to fill the need, for a high bluff overlooked their fort on the same side of the river—a splended vantage point from which the Indians could shoot right down upon them. Finding conditions in Sioux City even less promising than they had been at Cherokee, the settlers went south down the Missouri River to Onawa.

At first all of the families lived in the courthouse at Onawa, then each family found his own house. The Browns occupied one that had been used by the owner of a brickyard. This was a frame house, the first one they had occupied since coming west six years before. Mr. Brown went right to work and cut two stacks of hay so there would be feed for his stock in case

of heavy snows. For the gradual slope of six miles which separated the town from the river was one vast field of prairie grass higher than a man's head. Until the snows came, the stock was turned loose to graze at will along the river bottom.

The men only stayed long enough at Onawa to be sure that their families were as comfortable as possible. Then they went back to Cherokee to see how things were there.

While the men folks were gone, the grass became so dry that prairie fires were feared. So one morning Mrs. Brown and George set fires around their hay stacks. The owner of the land came down while they were busy with their task and helped them some. They had almost finished on the second side of the stack when George heard the roar of fire. Rushing to the other side of the stack, they were just in time to check the flames which had caught inside of the circle they had left at the base of the stacks. This preparation proved a wise precaution, for only a few days had elapsed when there swept upon and past them a prairie fire--a fire whose front was fifteen miles in extent at times as it roared and raged onward. Only the backfiring had saved the hay, for everything else vanished as though swallowed by some mammoth mouth.

After finding that everything was all right at Cherokee, the men returned to join their families at Onawa where they remained for some time before taking their families back to the almost unprotected settlement. When they thought it would be safe to do so, they had great difficulty in finding the cattle, for they had strayed. They had been ranging along the bottom lands of the Missouri which had not been touched by the prairie fire, and was covered with high prairie grass and brush. It took so long to find the cattle that some of the settlers decided to go on back to Cherokee. Among them was George Brown with their team, wagon and goods. George did not get very far. The fall had been so dry that the wagon tires weren't good and he had gone only a little way when one of them came off. Being near the river, he unloaded the goods into a nearby shed, put the tire back on and rolled the wagon down into the river to set it. Since night fall was near, he took the team and returned home for the night.

More of the cattle had been found and all of the settlers

left the next day for their homes in Cherokee, except for the Hammonds who kept their home in Onawa. Within two days they were in Cherokee once more in their homes where nothing had been molested. No Indians had been seen all the time they had been gone. During the winter the missing cattle belonging to Mr. Brown and Mr. Corbett had been found and kept by friends, so in the spring George went back to Onawa, sold the four young oxen, and took home with him his own heifer which had been petted until she was gentle enough to lead like a kitten.

About that same time, O. S. Wright, a Methodist preacher whose circuit reached from Spirit Lake through Peterson, arrived in Cherokee. For the first time the settlement was able to have regular religious services. At first these were held in homes, but after the courthouse was built they were held there once every two weeks. One of the remarkable things about Mr. Wright was his ability to walk. On the Sunday that Cherokee had its service, Mr. Wright held his morning service at ten in the morning in Petersen, then walked the eighteen miles and held the afternoon service at Cherokee at four in the afternoon. For two years he continued doing this.

After Wright left, several Methodist preachers followed, but still the services were regularly held. Many years passed before any other churches were built but the Methodist. By this time, a number of Baptists had come in and built a church of their own. Of the early settlers of the colony, Mr. Brown was the only one who was a charter member of the Baptist Church. Having been a deacon in the church before leaving Massachusetts, he became a deacon in the new church in Cherokee, a position which he held until his death in 1902.